

BENTON COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE OVERVIEW

Information and Data Provided By
Benton County Prosecuting Attorney

Adult Felony Cases

- All felony arrests in Benton County handled by Prosecuting Attorney
- Prison time, fine, right to trial by jury

Adult Felonies Opened: 2011-2021

- 2011: 1766
- 2012: 1747
- 2013: 1955
- 2014: 1959
- 2015: 2140
- 2016: 2306
- 2017: 2569
- 2018: 2845
- 2019: 3178
- 2020: 3028
- 2021: 2953

Homicide Charges: 2011-2021

- 2011: 3
- 2012: 3
- 2013: 7
- 2014: 4
- 2015: 2
- 2016: 9
- 2017: 5
- 2018: 9
- 2019: 3
- 2020: 3
- 2021: 10

Alternative Sentencing Options

- Benton County Drug Court
- Veteran's Treatment Court
- Benton County Work Program
- Diversions
- Roughly 60% of all felony prosecutions result in probation

Alternative Sentencing Options

- Jail and prison space is the foundation of all alternative sentencing options
- Without sufficient space there is no incentive for a defendant to agree to an alternative sentence

Jail Space = Public Safety

- 1960s to early 1990s saw an enormous crime increase
- Early 1990s through late 20-teens saw crime decline precipitously
- Why?

Jail Space = Public Safety

- Different Approach
- Increased policing, harsher sentencing laws, stricter bail, and increased incarceration
- Source: Latzer, Barry. *Rise and Fall of Violent Crime in America*. (2016).

Conclusion

- Benton County currently enjoys a low crime rate due to the wise decisions made in the past
- Policy choices now will help determine our future